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DIRECTORATE OF  
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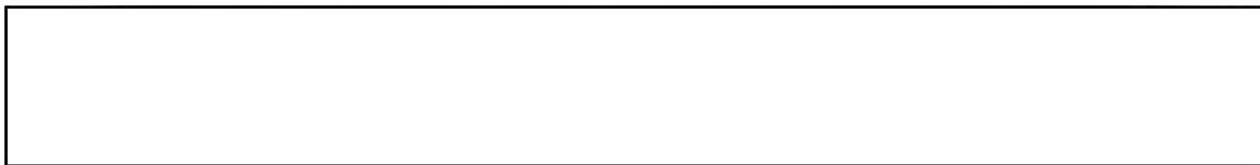
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North Vietnam: A long new article on the war by Defense Minister Giap, although not a blueprint of Communist military tactics, does provide some of the most authoritative clues to Hanoi's longer term strategy in some time.

Writing on the occasion of the army's 25th anniversary in late December, Giap strongly suggests that in the next few months the Communists will try to maintain a credible military threat and to prepare for whatever opportunities may come their way in the course of further protracted warfare. Giap repeatedly stresses the need for the Communists to preserve and to build their forces, to safeguard rural base areas, and to be ready to exploit allied military and political vulnerabilities as they may appear.

Giap calls for continued strong military action by the Communists. His emphasis on fundamentals, however, and on ensuring that adequate political preparations precede climactic phases of the struggle suggests that Hanoi does not believe the time is ripe for an across-the-board challenge to the allied position in South Vietnam through an all-out military effort. Although Giap keeps this option open in case a suitable opportunity arises, he seems to see this as a contingency well down the road and implies that the proper Communist course at the moment is essentially to play for time.

As he has in the past, Giap stresses guerrilla warfare during all phases of the struggle, but he also gives prominent play to the need for big-unit action and for such tactics as attacks on cities. Giap makes clear, however, that main force operations and urban attacks must be carried out "rationally"--that is, not in ways that will decimate Communist forces and undercut their capabilities for dragging out the war indefinitely.

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Giap's article is in line with other evidence that the Communists are now concentrating on trying to protect their assets in South Vietnam and to improve their over-all position for the longer term struggle. In this regard, Giap seems to echo the gradual, step-by-step strategy for the war that was set forth by Hanoi after the costly 1968 offensives and that has been reflected in Communist military tactics in South Vietnam since last spring.

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Israel: The armed forces began major military exercises in the Sinai on 29 December. The maneuvers will last for several days. Since taking Sinai, the Israelis have often conducted exercises in the peninsula and are building elaborate defensive positions along the Suez Canal and at the entrance to the Gulf of Aqaba. There are no indications that the exercises are a prelude to a major thrust into Egypt, but they probably are intended to impress the Arabs.

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Ethiopia: Several students were killed yesterday in a clash with police at Haile Selassie University in Addis Ababa. The students had gathered on the campus following the murder of the recently elected president of the student union by unknown assailants on 28 December. Although tension between the students and the government has been building gradually since the university opened last fall, the hard-core radicals have been unable so far to provoke any new crisis in their continuing anti-government campaign. This latest incident, however, is likely to provide them with the necessary ammunition to initiate a new round of student disturbances.

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USSR-Brazil: The two countries are discussing landing rights in Rio de Janeiro of the Soviet airline Aeroflot [redacted]

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Under the proposed agreement, the Soviets, who hope to fly weekly between Rio and Moscow, would grant reciprocal rights to Varig, the international airline of Brazil. The USSR reportedly already has concluded a deal with the Rolls Royce Company in Sao Paulo to service the engines of Aeroflot aircraft in Latin America and the engines of all Soviet civil aircraft sold there. Cuba is now the only country in Latin America where Aeroflot flies, but recently the French gave the Soviet company onward rights from Paris to both North and South America.

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USSR-Yugoslavia: The negotiation of the annual Yugoslav-Soviet trade protocol for 1970 has been delayed [redacted]

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Last year's trade talks were started so late that the protocol was not signed until April. The delay was attributed in part to Moscow's unhappiness over Tito's outspoken opposition to the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia. This year's postponement may have resulted from differences between Yugoslav negotiators who wish to expand direct enterprise-to-enterprise trade and Soviet negotiators who prefer to stick closely to the more restrictive commodity lists provided in the 1966-70 long-term trade agreement. [redacted]

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